

George Washington to John Sullivan, May 31, 1779, two same date, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

To MAJOR GENERAL JOHN SULLIVAN

Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 31, 1779.

Dr. Sir: I transmit you a letter of the 8th. extracts of the 12th., and one of the 24th. instant from Brigadier General Hand, which he forwarded to me, not knowing where to find you. I have mentioned in my letter to Gen: Hand my forwarding them to you.

I shall write the board of war to send the supplies of clothing for the 11th. Pennsylvania regiment. I shall also request them to forward a set of shoemaker's tools &c. for each brigade or regiment. These will serve in some measure to lessen our demands on the article of shoes and of course lessen our portage. As to the propriety of dismounting the men under Capn. Carbury¹ as mentioned by Major Prowel I leave it entirely to your direction.

It looks as if both men and horse might be better employed than in the condition in which they now act. The one by joining the regiment, the other as pack horses or the like.

That part of late Malcom's regiment, which belongs to the 11th. Pennsylvania and now doing duty with Col. Spencer's is to join its own regiment on its arrival at the Susquehannah.

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Col. Shreves regiment is now on its march to Easton. It passed this place yesterday. The remains of Forman's which accompanied it, you will be pleased to order to join Col. Spencers. I hope the incorporation of the officers and men of the corps with the regiment will render it pretty complete [and subject to no further changes].

Inclosed you have my instructions for your government. The more I consider the object of baggage, the more forcibly does the necessity of disencumbering both of officers and men press upon my mind.

In addition to what I have said in the instructions suffer me to request your particular attention to see your army in such a situation with respect to lightness as will give it that rapidity of motion upon which so much of our success will depend. All superfluous baggage, every thing not absolutely indispensable to both officer and soldier should be deposited at Easton. The officers I am persuaded will see the propriety of the measure and adopt it without hesitation. I also transmit you extracts from a letter to General Schuyler of the 21st. instant.² The letter to which he alludes has been sent you.³ I am, etc.⁴

¹apt. Henry 1arberry (1arbery), of the Eleventh Pennsylvania Regiment. He was wounded in August, 1779; retired in January, 1781. He seems to have been in service in 1783, as he was then designated as a captain-lieutenant and was one of the leaders of the soldiers who threatened Congress.

²chuyler's letter of May 21 is in the Washington Papers. It informed of the exploration of the country from Wood Creek to Oswegatchie, of the British post at the latter place, and of Lieut. Col. John Butler's movement with the Indians.

³he letter alluded to was that of James Deane to Colonel Van Schaick, May 16, 1779. (See Washington's letter to Maj. Gen. John Sullivan, May 28, 1779, ante.)

⁴he draft is in the writing of James McHenry. ⁴he phrase in brackets is in the writing of Washington.